

REMARKS

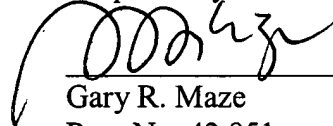
The objection to claim 22 has been corrected by adding the sealing element to it for proper antecedent for "said sealing element". Claim 19 has been rewritten in independent form to secure its allowance.

Claim 16 has been rejected as anticipated by Strom (USP 2,159,640). The reasoning offered by the Examiner is that Strom item 11 is the mandrel. Item 11 is a rubber sleeve that sits on a central tubular member 10 between sleeves 12. Sleeves 12 drive wedges 9 under slips 6 to force them out radially into a sealing grip. The problem with the Examiner's application of this reference against claim 16 is the Examiner's interpretation of the meaning of the term "mandrel". In www.dictionary.com mandrel has several definitions the most apt here is the following, "A shaft on which a working tool is mounted, as in a dental drill. Clearly the mandrel in the cited reference to those skilled in the art is the "central tubular member 10" which is clearly not expanded. Item 11 is made of rubber and needs the stiffness of the central tubular member to even retain its shape. Since the Examiner has relied on item 11 as the mandrel, claim 16 has been amended to make explicit what was previously implicit from the common definition of mandrel. With the additional language of definition of mandrel now added to the claim it is clear that the only mandrel in this reference is central tubular member 10, which is not expanded.

All the claims are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

February 25, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



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